

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus that can include a plurality of applications, the image forming apparatus comprising:

a displaying part displaying a screen used for selecting an application on an operation display part of the image forming apparatus, wherein the screen shows applications and an assignment status of each application indicating whether a function key is already assigned;
and

an assigning part assigning a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed, such that the selected application is executed when the function key is later pushed after assigning of the selected application has occurred;

wherein the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus and that include at least one of a copy application, a printer application, and a facsimile application;
and

~~wherein, when the function key is pushed for the selected application, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating that the function key cannot be assigned to the selected application if the number of applications assigned to the function key already reaches a limit number.~~

Claim 2 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the function key is a hardware key.

Claim 3 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the function key is a software key that is displayed on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein assigning by the assigning part is performed when the image forming apparatus is in a mode for assigning the selected application to the function key.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein, when assigning of the selected application is performed, the image forming apparatus displays a guidance screen indicating an operation of the function key on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 6 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the guidance screen includes an image of an operation panel of the image forming apparatus and an image for guiding a user to the function key.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein, when assigning of the selected application is performed, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating the number of applications assigning to the function key.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, the assigning part including:

a part obtaining a function key ID corresponding to the pushed function key; and
a part storing an application ID of the selected application and the obtained function key ID in which the application ID is associated with the function key ID.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein, in addition to the function key ID, the image forming apparatus stores extension key IDs for identifying a plurality of applications assigned to the function key.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein, when a function key to which a plurality of applications are assigned is pushed, the image forming apparatus displays a screen including the names of the plurality of applications for a user to select one application from the plurality of applications.

Claim 12 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein the image forming apparatus displays application status for each of the plurality of applications.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the image forming apparatus selects one application from a plurality of applications according to a number of times a user pushes a function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the image forming apparatus selects one application from a plurality of

applications in which the one application corresponds to an extension key ID that is the same as a number of times a user pushes the function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A method used for assigning an application to a function key in an image forming apparatus that can include a plurality of applications, the method comprising:

displaying a screen used for selecting an application on an operation display part of the image forming apparatus, wherein the screen shows applications and an assignment status of each application indicating whether a function key is already assigned; and

assigning a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed, such that the selected application is executed when the function key is later pushed after assigning of the selected application has occurred;

wherein the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus and that include at least one of a copy application, a printer application, and a facsimile application; and

~~wherein, when the function key is pushed for the selected application, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating that the function key cannot be assigned to the selected application if the number of applications assigned to the function key already reaches a limit.~~

Claim 16 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the function key is a hardware key.

Claim 17 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the function key is a software key that is displayed on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the step of assigning is performed when the image forming apparatus is in a mode for assigning the selected application to the function key.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein, when assigning of the selected application is performed, the image forming apparatus displays a guidance screen indicating an operation of the function key on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 20 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the guidance screen includes an image of an operation panel of the image forming apparatus and an image for guiding a user to the function key.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein, when assigning of the selected application is performed, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating the number of applications assigned to the function key.

Claim 22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein, in the step of assigning, the image forming apparatus obtains a function key ID corresponding to the

pushed function key; and stores an application ID of the selected application and the obtained function key ID in which the application ID is associated with the function key ID.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein, in addition to the function key ID, the image forming apparatus stores extension key IDs for identifying a plurality of applications assigned to the function key.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein, when a function key to which a plurality of applications are assigned is pushed, the image forming apparatus displays a screen including the names of the plurality of applications for a user to select one application from the plurality of applications.

Claim 26 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the image forming apparatus displays application status for each of the plurality of applications.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the image forming apparatus selects one application from a plurality of applications according to a number of times a user pushes a function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the image forming apparatus selects one application from a plurality of applications in which the one application corresponds to an extension key ID that is the same as a number of times a user pushes the function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claims 29-42 (Canceled).

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium storing a computer program for causing an image forming apparatus to assign an application to a function key, in which the image forming apparatus can include a plurality of applications, the computer program comprising:

displaying program code means for displaying a screen used for selecting an application on an operation display part of the image forming apparatus, wherein the screen shows applications and an assignment status of each application indicating whether a function key is already assigned; and

assigning program code means for assigning a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed, such that the selected application is executed when the function key is later pushed after assigning of the selected application has occurred;

wherein the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus and that include at least one of a copy application, a printer application and a facsimile application; and

~~wherein, when the function key is pushed for the selected application, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating that the function key cannot be assigned to the selected application if the number of applications assigned to the function key already reaches a limit.~~

Claim 44 (Original): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the function key is a hardware key.

Claim 45 (Original): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the function key is a software key that is displayed on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein assigning by the assigning program code means is performed when the image forming apparatus is in a mode for assigning the selected application to the function key.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the assigning program code means displays a guidance screen indicating an operation of the function key on the operation display part of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 48 (Original): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 47, wherein the guidance screen includes an image of an operation panel of the image forming apparatus and an image for guiding a user to the function key.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the assigning program code means displays a screen indicating the number of applications assigned to the function key.

Claim 50 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 49, wherein the assigning program code means displays a screen indicating that the function

key cannot be assigned to the selected application if the number of applications assigned to the function key already reaches a limit number.

Claim 51 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, the assigning program code means including:

program code means for obtaining a function key ID corresponding to the pushed function key; and

program code means for storing an application ID of the selected application and the obtained function key ID in which the application ID is associated with the function key ID.

Claim 52 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 51, wherein, in addition to the function key ID, the assigning program code means stores extension key IDs for identifying a plurality of applications assigned to the function key.

Claim 53 (Canceled).

Claim 54 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the application status for each of the plurality of applications is displayed.

Claim 55 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 43, the computer program further comprising program code means for selecting one application from a plurality of applications according to a number of times a user pushes a function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claim 56 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 52, the computer program further comprising program code means for selecting one application from a plurality of applications in which the one application corresponds to an extension key ID that is the same as a number of times a user pushes the function key to which the plurality of applications are assigned within a time period.

Claim 57 (New): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein, when the function key is pushed for the assigning of the selected application, the image forming apparatus displays a screen indicating that the function key cannot be assigned to the selected application if the number of applications assigned to the function key already reaches a limit number.